

## **Pregnancy Experience & Use of Emergency Contraception Among Young Women in the Bay Area**

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### *Background:*

Emergency contraception (EC) use among young women who have experienced pregnancy and those who have experienced abortion has not been adequately assessed.

### *Methods:*

This study was designed to examine whether pregnancy experience and abortion experience increase the likelihood of EC use in a randomized, controlled study of increased access to EC. The data used were collected during 2001-2003 in the Bay Area, California from 2,117 women aged 15-24. Multivariable logistic regression was used to examine the effect of previous pregnancy and previous abortion on EC use. Sexual and contraceptive behaviors and attitudes about pregnancy were also examined.

### *Results:*

Young women with prior pregnancy were more likely to take contraceptive risks and were also 31% more likely to use EC, adjusting for demographic variables, sexual behavior, contraceptive use and pregnancy attitude. Findings for young women with previous abortions were similar, with 40% greater odds of EC use than those with no previous abortion, adjusting for the same variables.

### *Discussion:*

Increased rates of unprotected intercourse as well as increased EC use among young women with previous pregnancies suggest that a reduction in unintended pregnancies may not be observed in this subgroup of young women and indicate the need for targeted education about contraceptive risk.

### Supervisory Committee:

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